

Message Text

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TO USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

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EXDIS

FOLLOWING IS REPEAT STATE 060673, SENT ALL DIPLOMATIC AND
CONSULAR POSTS 12 MARCH 76:

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 060673

EXDIS INFORM CONSULS- FOR AMBASSADOR FROM EAGLEBURGER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OGEN, APER

SUBJECT: EMPLOYEE BRIEFINGS ON PRIOR, CURRENT AND

- ANTICIPATED MOSCOW SERVICE

1. AS YOU MAY ALREADY KNOW THERE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE
PRESS SPECULATION IN WASHINGTON REGARDING ALLEGED HEALTH
HAZARDS OF MOSCOW SERVICE. POSTS SHOULD KNOW THAT THE
DEPARTMENT HAS DISCUSSED THE PROBLEM IN DETAIL WITH AFSA.
THE FOLLOWING LETTER IS IN RESPONSE TO AFSA QUERIES
REGARDING THE DEPARTMENT'S PROCEDURES FOR BRIEFING
EMPLOYEES WITH PRIOR, CURRENT, OR ANTICIPATED MOSCOW
SERVICE. IT SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF ALL U.S.
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EMPLOYEES WITH PRIOR MOSCOW SERVICE (INCLUDING TDY IN

EXCESS OF ONE MONTH) AND THOSE BEING ASSIGNED TO MOSCOW.

2. THE NAMES OF THOSE EMPLOYEES WHO FIT THE ABOVE DESCRIPTION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE DEPARTMENT BY PER CABLE. WHEN MISSIONS WITH SUCH EMPLOYEES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED, THE CLASSIFIED FACT SHEET ON THE TECHNICAL BACKGROUND AND MEDICAL ASPECTS OF THE MOSCOW SITUATION

WILL BE TRANSMITTED TO THE APPROPRIATE POSTS.

3. THE FACT SHEET WILL THEN BE SHOWN TO THOSE WITH PRIOR OR ANTICIPATED MOSCOW SERVICE AND THEIR ADULT DEPENDENTS BY YOURSELF OR OTHER SENIOR OFFICIAL AS APPROPRIATE. IF QUESTIONS ARISE WHICH CANNOT BE ANSWERED AT POST, THEY SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR REPLY. MEDICAL QUESTIONS SHOULD BE SENT IN THE MED CHANNEL AND OTHERS IN THE PER CHANNEL.

4. THOSE BRIEFED AS DESCRIBED ABOVE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THEY ARE BEING BRIEFED ON A CLASSIFIED BASIS AND WILL BE EXPECTED TO TREAT THE SUBJECT ACCORDINGLY. THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS MESSAGE IS NOT TO BE DISCUSSED WITH HOST OR THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS OR OFFICIAL OR UNOFFICIAL AMERICANS WHO HAVE NOT SERVED IN MOSCOW OR ARE NOT CURRENTLY UNDER ORDERS FOR MOSCOW.

5. BEGIN TEXT:

IN RESPONSE TO YOUR LETTER OF FEBRUARY 11 AND SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS, I WOULD LIKE TO OUTLINE THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S PROCEDURE;S FOR BRIEFING ITS EMPLOYEES WITH CURRENT, PRIOR OR ANTICIPATED MOSCOW SERVICE ON POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS AT POST.

EMPLOYEES NOW IN MOSCOW WERE BRIEFED BY AMBASSADOR STOESSEL ON FEBRUARY 6, 1976. THE DEPARTMENT TOOK IMMEDIATE STEPS AT THAT TIME TO IDENTIFY AND BRIEF EMPLOYEES ABOUT TO DEPART FOR MOSCOW. ALL EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE LEFT WASHINGTON FOR MOSCOW SINCE FEBRUARY 6 AND THEIR ADULT DEPENDENTS HAVE RECEIVED AN ORAL BRIEFING BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DEPARTMENT'S MEDICAL DIVISION, THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL AND THE OFFICE OF SOVIET UNION AFFAIRS. OTHER AGENCIES OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WITH EMPLOYEES BOUND FOR MOSCOW HAVE BEEN INFORMED OF THE DEPARTMENT'S PROCEDURES AND ADVISED THAT THEIR EMPLOYEES ARE WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH BRIEFINGS PRIOR TO THEIR DEPARTURE FOR MOSCOW. THOSE AGENCIES WHICH ASSIGN LARGE NUMBERS OF THEIR OWN PEOPLE TO MOSCOW, SUCH AS THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, HAVE

BEEN GIVEN FULL INFORMATION ON THE NATURE OF THE SITUATION AT POST SO THAT THEY MIGHT CONDUCT THEIR OWN BRIEFINGS.

ON MARCH 1, EMBASSY MOSCOW RECEIVED A CLASSIFIED FACT SHEET WHICH NOT ONLY GAVE FURTHER BACKGROUND ON THE NATURE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM, BUT ALSO ANSWERED QUESTIONS REGARDING THE MEDICAL FACTS AS THEY ARE NOW KNOWN TO RELATE TO POTENTIAL HEALTH HAZARDS. THE EMPLOYEES AND DEPENDENTS WERE PERMITTED TO READ THE FACT SHEET AND POSE ANY QUESTIONS THEY MIGHT HAVE. YOUR OWN COMMITTEE HAS RECEIVED A SIMILAR BRIEFING ON A CLASSIFIED BASIS. AS FURTHER INFORMATION IN THIS AREA IS DEVELOPED, THE FACT SHEET WILL BE UPDATED AND EMPLOYEES KEPT INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS.

EMPLOYEES PROCEEDING TO MOSCOW FROM WASHINGTON AFTER MARCH 1 WILL BE BRIEFED IN THE SAME WAY. THOSE PROCEEDING TO MOSCOW ON DIRECT TRANSFER WILL ALSO BE SHOWN THE CLASSIFIED FACT SHEET AND WILL BE BRIEFED IN FULL ON THE SITUATION. ANY QUESTIONS THAT CANNOT BE ANSWERED AT POST WILL BE REFERRED TO THE DEPARTMENT. IN ALL CASES, IF AFTER THE BRIEFING EMPLOYEES ASK THAT THEIR ASSIGNMENT BE RE-ASSIGNED OR THAT THEY BE TRANSFERRED FROM MOSCOW, THEIR REQUESTS WILL BE CONSIDERED FAVORABLY AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE.

OVER THE YEARS THE MEDICAL DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE HAS ROUTINELY MONITORED THE HEALTH OF PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO MOSCOW, JUST AS IT HAS WITH ALL PERSONNEL ASSIGNED OVERSEAS. RECENTLY, THE MEDICAL DIVISION AND AN EXPERT CONSULTANT HAVE REVIEWED SELECTIVELY THE RECORDS OF SOME EMPLOYEES WITH MOSCOW SERVICE TO DETERMINE IF ANY UNUSUAL MEDICAL CONDITIONS ARE PRESENT. THE RESULTS THUS FAR HAVE BEEN NEGATIVE.

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NEVERTHELESS, THE DEPARTMENT HAS DECIDED TO CONDUCT AN EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDY OF ALL EMPLOYEES WITH MOSCOW SERVICE. THIS IS AN ATTEMPT BY THE DEPARTMENT TO DETERMINE WHETHER THERE IS ANY CORRELATION BETWEEN THE MOSCOW ENVIRONMENT AND ANY HEALTH PROBLEMS WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN EXPERIENCED BY SOME EMPLOYEES STATIONED THERE IN THE PAST.

DETAILED PROCEDURES FOR THE EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDY HAVE NOT YET BEEN ESTABLISHED BUT CONSULTANTS HAVE BEEN CONTACTED AND PRELIMINARY QUESTIONNAIRES ARE BEING PREPARED. ANY EMPLOYEE OR FORMER EMPLOYEE WITH PRIOR MOSCOW SERVICE WHO IS CONCERNED REGARDING POSSIBLE BIOMEDICAL EFFECTS OF SUCH SERVICE MAY CONTACT THE OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR MEDICAL SERVICES DIRECTLY. SINCERELY,

LAWRENCE S. EAGLE0URGER. END TEXT. KISSINGER UNQUOTE.
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